

A Year of Progress

A Letter From the Superintendent

Welcome! We at the National Park Service are happy to report on the progress we have made over the past year in developing a plan for the Governors Island National Monument.

Our first newsletter introduced the Governors Island National Monument, inviting you to share ideas and concerns with us, and to become engaged in planning its future.

This newsletter reports on the ideas we heard, and how those ideas are being incorporated into our General Management Plan (GMP). This plan will describe the vision for the long-term management and development of the National Monument. Public comments now number in the thousands. Most were received following public tours last summer or were sent to our websites. With a sound understanding of the broad interests in the National Monument, combined with several research studies currently underway, the GMP team was able to begin developing the core parts of the plan – a set of foundation statements about the National Monument's mission, and a series of preliminary management alternatives.

In this newsletter you'll find more information about the foundation statements and the preliminary management alternatives, as well as a comment page we hope you will fill out and send back to us. We will consider every response as we refine the alternatives and create a draft plan.

The Draft GMP will present a preferred alternative – the alternative that will best preserve and interpret the National Monument's cultural and natural resources. Depending on your comments and internal reviews, the preferred alternative could be quite different from the alternatives now under consideration. This is a critical stage in planning the future of the Governors Island National Monument. We are eager to hear your views and thank you for your continued interest in Governors Island.

Linda Neal, Superintendent

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Governors Island – New York's next spectacular destination.

Planning for Governors Island

The National Park Service (NPS) is in the midst of planning for the Governors Island National Monument. The Monument is anticipated to be a focal point for visitors to the island, especially for those seeking to better understand the island's rich history and explore its historic buildings and grounds.

The 1978 National Parks and Recreation Act requires the National Park Service to create general management plans for all national parks. GMPs describe a long-term management strategy appropriate to the specific conditions of each park. The Governors Island National Monument GMP will address resource preservation,

carrying capacity, visitor use, and development issues for the National Monument. The Monument comprises 22-acres of the 172-acre island. The remaining acreage is owned and operated by the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC), a New York State and City agency. The NPS and GIPEC are working concurrently, and in a coordinated manner, on redevelopment plans for Governors Island.

The GMP will be completed by Winter, 2006. The timeline below shows where we are in the planning process.



Laying the Foundation

After public meetings last fall, a team of historians, park planners, and recognized experts began laying the foundation for managing the National Monument. Management will be guided by several factors, most important being the Presidential Proclamations that established the National Monument, specific covenants or legal requirements, the history of the island and forts, and the themes or stories about this place that should be shared with visitors.

Presidential Proclamations

Proclamations by Presidents William J. Clinton and George W. Bush established Governors Island National Monument *"for the purpose of preserving, restoring, and enhancing the public visitation and appreciation"* of Governors Island, referring directly to the historic *"fortifications that served as an outpost to protect New York City from sea attack."* The later proclamation recounts that *"these two important historic objects, Castle Williams and Fort Jay, are part of a National Historic Landmark District designated in 1985. Between 1806 and 1811, these fortifications were constructed as part of the First and Second American Systems of Coastal Fortification. Castle Williams and Fort Jay represent two of the finest examples of defensive structures in use from the Renaissance to the American Civil War. They also played important roles in the War of 1812, the American Civil War, and World Wars I and II."* The forts and their related resources are central components in the development of harbor defenses, the growth and professionalism of the U.S. Army, and its long use of the island as a vital administrative headquarters. In sum, the National Monument should provide opportunities for the public to observe and understand the harbor's rich history, its defense, and its ecology.

Legal Covenants

Certain preservation covenants and real estate restrictions were made part of the legal transfer of the island to NPS and GIPEC. Of particular importance for the NPS is the requirement to *"maintain the National Monument as an educational and civic resource of special historic character and as a recreational and open space resource for the people of New York City, New York State and the United States."* To fulfill that charge, the NPS was given the authority to enforce real estate use restrictions on the island – including restrictions on permanent residential use, industrial use, and casinos. The NPS also ensures that the island's historic buildings and landscapes are preserved by helping to enforce, along with other preservation agencies, the historic preservation covenants that cover resources within the National Historical Landmark (NHL) District, a federally-recognized area covering the northern portion of the Island.

Themes

NPS has begun outlining several themes, or stories, to explore with visitors. The key stories depict Governors Island's central but separate location, dramatic contrasts, remarkable people, and military power.

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Fort Jay is a star-shaped fort of French design surrounded by a dry moat and *Glacis* – a plane of grass that extends from the fort's walls to the shore. It is one of the largest and best preserved examples of its kind in the country.



Photo: Peter Aaron/Esto

Castle Williams is a nearly circular red sandstone and granite fortification. The Castle is the first American-designed fort with casemated gun emplacements. Its innovative design served for decades as a prototype for seacoast fortification.

Preliminary Management Alternatives

The process of developing the GMP includes studying a range of alternative visions rather than creating one single vision. This is done to ensure that all reasonable ideas are considered and evaluated before actions are taken. The GMP team, composed of professionals in planning, architecture, landscape architecture, history, archeology, education, interpretation, and management, developed the preliminary alternatives based on public comments, studies, and the Monument's mission described earlier.

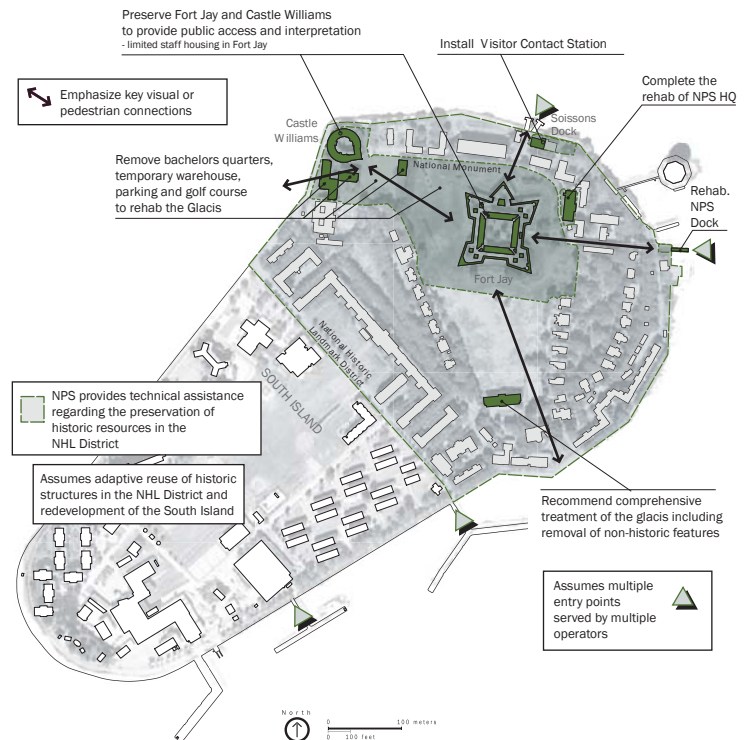
The alternatives are consistent with federal laws, such as the National Historic Preservation Act, and with NPS policies. The alternatives respond to the broad, preliminary planning outlined by GIPEC this past summer, which seeks to make Governors Island a destination with great public open space and heritage tourism attractions, as well as education, conference, entertainment, and cultural arts facilities. (See www.govisland.com for updates on GIPEC's planning

process and activities.) Other influences include plans for Lower Manhattan, the Brooklyn waterfront, the National Park Service GMP underway at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island National Monument, and the "National Parks of New York Harbor" initiative.

You will see some similarities among the three alternatives presented on the next pages. These common elements are outlined below as "Common & Early Actions," and could be undertaken regardless of which alternative is ultimately selected. If funds are available, several of these actions could be started "early", that is, before the completion of the final GMP. Each alternative carries implications for the kinds of historic preservation, public use, staff, and partnerships needed, as well as the level of funding needed by the NPS to operate the National Monument. Developing cost estimates for each alternative will be done at a subsequent stage.

Common & Early Actions

- Interpret the broad themes and history of the National Monument, National Historic Landmark (NHL) District, island and harbor using the forts and their associated landscapes as primary features.
- Develop preservation treatments for the most significant National Monument resources (Fort Jay, Castle Williams, and the glacis) that comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, the Preservation and Design Manual for the Governors Island NHL District, and other relevant preservation guidelines.
- Establish partnerships with compatible organizations on and off-island to help achieve the NPS's goals for historic preservation and visitor programming.
- Complete a program of baseline inventories, studies and analyses of NPS resources and island history.
- Remediate hazardous materials, remove safety hazards, and make basic repairs to NPS facilities to permit public use and visitation.
- Remove non-historic and non-contributing features, such as the 1970s-era bachelor's quarters, a former "temporary" warehouse, remnants of the golf course, and extraneous parking lots.
- Develop a visitor contact station adjacent to Soissons dock.
- Complete the build-out of the NPS Headquarters Building.
- Rehabilitate the NPS Dock – the historic point of access.
- Ensure safe, convenient and affordable public access to the National Monument.
- Establish NPS's administrative capacity and operational infrastructure to care for resources, to provide for public enjoyment of the National Monument and to fulfill the NPS's responsibilities associated with the Real Estate Restrictions and Historic Preservation Covenants.
- Utilize a portion of the apartments in Fort Jay for NPS staff housing.



Monument Emphasis

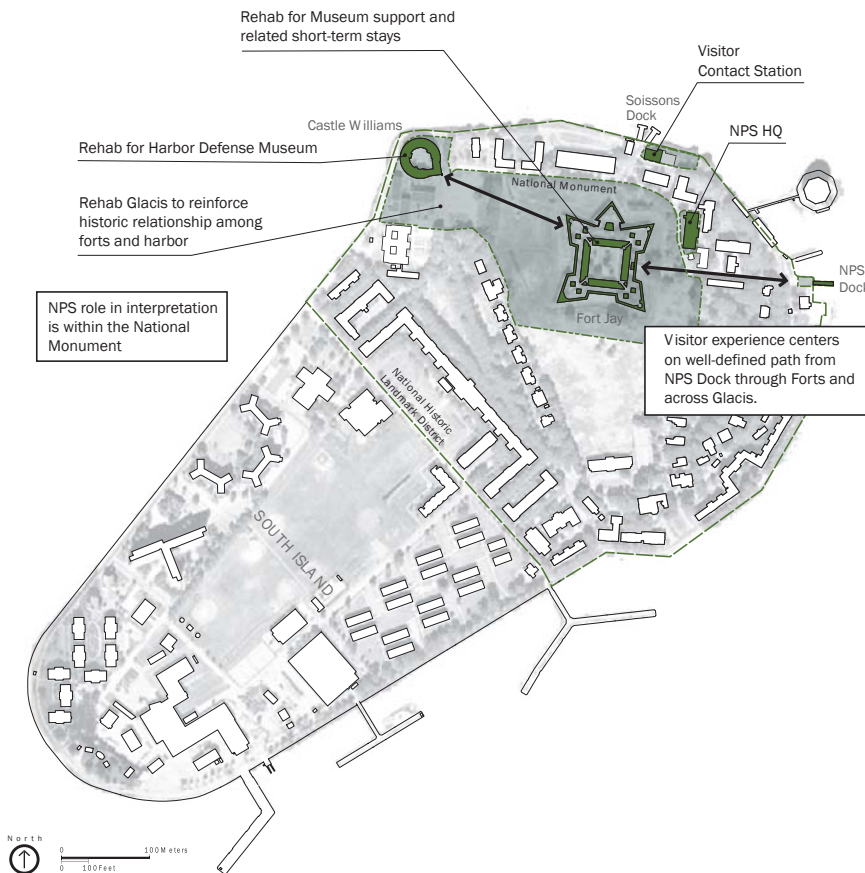
A

In Alternative A, NPS would offer visitors a complete story of the island's history and significance through public programs within the National Monument boundary.

- Interpretation and education would focus on harbor defense themes. NPS would help visitors understand and make personal connections to the development of the island's defensive features and its Army and

Coast Guard occupation from 1794 to 1996.

- Historic preservation treatments for the forts and related landscapes could range from structural stabilization to extensive rehabilitation to allow for uses that are compatible with harbor defense themes.
- NPS would partner with military and other defense-related agencies and organizations to develop public programs and uses for National Monument resources.

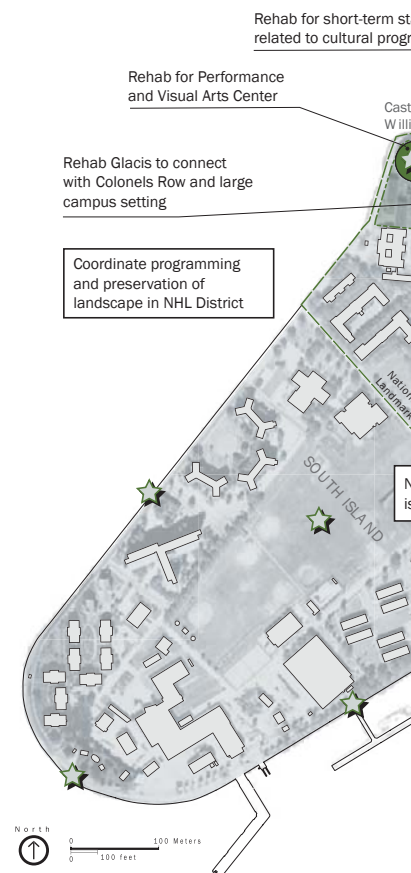


Whole Island Experience

B

Under Alternative B, NPS would collaborate with other cultural and arts organizations to preserve and interpret the National Monument, providing visitors an island-wide cultural experience.

- Fort Jay, Castle Williams and the glacis would form the nucleus of NPS activities and serve as a springboard for involvement in the larger contexts of the NHL District and greater island.
- Rehabilitated National Monument structures and landscapes would



Experience

serve as venues for cultural events, such as art expositions, performances, and educational symposia, attracting broad and diverse audiences. Programs in NPS facilities would be coordinated with other island owners, operators and tenants.

- NPS would interpret the island's history from locations throughout the island: within the National Monument boundary, at island arrival points, and at other key historical points of interest.

Harbor & Beyond



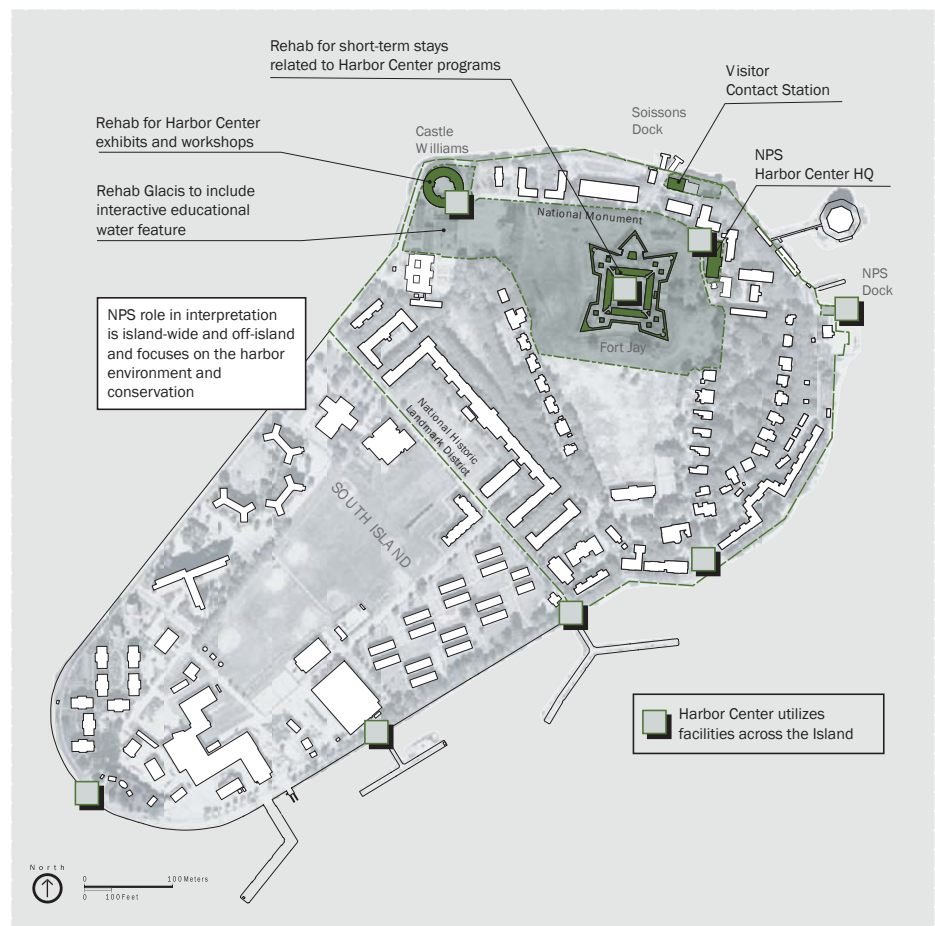
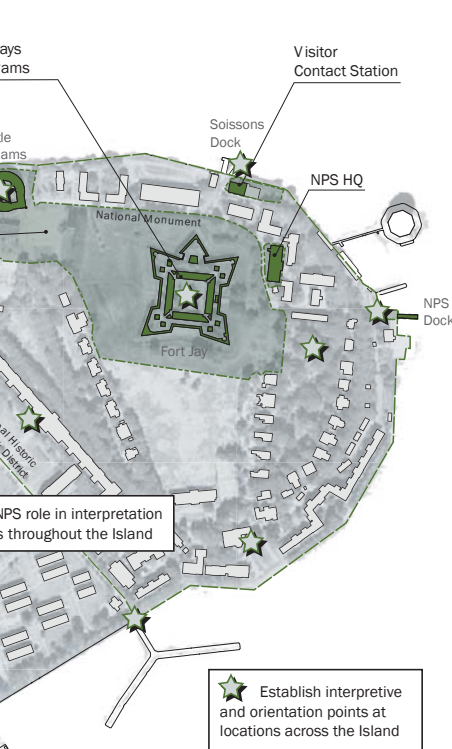
Alternative C capitalizes on Governors Island National Monument being the most centrally located of the National Parks of New York Harbor, and the

symbolic centerpiece of all the natural and cultural resources arrayed around the harbor.

- NPS would offer visitors opportunities to explore topics that extend beyond the National Monument and island, and extend out to the greater harbor and region.
- NPS would rehabilitate National Monument structures to participate in a

"Harbor Center" concept for the Island. Temporary and permanent installations within the National Monument, complemented by other facilities on the Island, would explore the natural environment and conservation of the Island and New York Harbor.

- Partnerships would be pursued with educational, environmental, maritime and other harbor-related organizations within the region and from around the country to develop and manage public programs.



What We Heard

You have spoken! Thanks to your comments over the past year, NPS better understands what you want to see and do at Governors Island National Monument.

Your input continues to shape the plans for New York's newest National Park and makes sure it will be a place for everyone. Your suggestions fell into three major areas: arts & history, recreation, and education.

Suggestions

A large number of people want to assure that the Island becomes a place for historic interpretation and commemoration, including tours, performances, and exhibits that make history come alive. You also suggested creating a downtown green space for sports, biking and running as well as just picnicking and enjoying the fabulous views. A third use suggested for the National Monument was education, especially with an environmental or scientific research component. All of these ideas are consistent with the mandates for the Island, and NPS will explore ways to incorporate some aspect of all three in the final plan.

Other suggestions included banning helicopter flyovers, being careful not to exclude residents of any of the five boroughs or New Jersey in the planning process, and taking into consideration the role of veterans, civilian and military personnel stationed on the Island, as well as their families who called the Island their home.

Concerns

You also voiced some concerns. High on the list was the need to provide ferry and small boat access, particularly from Brooklyn. We also heard about the need for environmentally sound "green" design and the necessity of preserving the historical structures on the Island. Another concern was that of funding, realizing that it will take money to make a great National Monument. Suggestions included exploring private funding options as well as possible revenue-raising activities on the Island.

All of the ideas and concerns for Governors Island National Monument are a valuable part of the planning process. Your continued support and interest will keep the process on the right track. Log onto www.governorsislandnationalmonument.org or www.nps.gov/gois/plan to add new ideas, ask questions and make comments. In March 2005, we will post a summary of your comments on the websites.

Laying the Foundation continued from page 2

Early on, the Island's central location made it a logical spot, at one time, from which to defend New York City. Later, while in the middle of one of the busiest harbors in the world, Governors Island's isolation from the mainland made it an ideal location for a quarantine station, prison, and detention center. The contrasts evident on the Island included: military/civilian workers, workplace/home, local government/national government, small community/bustling urban metropolis, and middle-class/elite. Furthermore, the stark fortifications, and the military culture they represent, stand in strong contrast to the nearby skyscrapers of the Manhattan financial district.

On Governors Island, race, religion, and ethnicity were factors in determining rank and power. People of many different backgrounds have spent time on Governors Island, from the Lenape Indians, to 18th-century German immigrants, including the diverse personnel of the 20th century U.S. Coast Guard.

From the 1790s until the late 1990s, Governors Island also symbolized the insecurities and power of the U.S. military, and figured into global power struggles – as a fortified position during the American Revolution and the War of 1812, as a munitions depot, draft induction and training center, and debarkation hub during the World Wars. It was also a site for important international diplomatic meetings in the late 20th century.

Control of the island itself has shifted over time between private individuals and governments, colonial powers, and among city, state and federal governments. The Island's architecture and landscape reflect the hierarchy of social class once institutionalized in American society, and the system of rank essential to military life.



Early in the 19th century, as the forts' original defensive designs became obsolete, and as Governors Island grew to become one of the most important military headquarters in the eastern United States, the forts served a variety of new purposes including barracks, prisons and warehouses. These functions largely continued through the U.S. Army's departure in 1966 to the end of the U.S. Coast Guard's tenure in 1996.

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE INVITES YOU TO HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF NEW YORK'S NEWEST NATIONAL PARK.

Please give us your comments by logging on to: www.governorsislandnationalmonument.org
OR, fill out the form below and Fax it to 212-514-8302 or return it to:

Governors Island National Monument
Battery Maritime Building, Slip 7
10 South Street
New York, NY 10004

Please Comment
by February 15th

Do you think the themes are interesting? Are there other stories we should explore? _____

Have we identified all the actions or improvements that should be common to any management alternative? _____

What do you find most interesting or valuable in the three alternatives? _____

Who are potential partners for these alternatives? _____

Do you have any preferences among the alternatives or among the uses suggested for the buildings? _____

Did the alternatives cover the range of options and uses that should be considered? What else might be explored? _____

If you would like to be on our MAILING LIST please fill in the form below and return it via our website address, FAX number or mailing address.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Title: _____ Organization: _____

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Email: _____ Phone: _____

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!
Please look inside to learn about planning for Governors Island, and how
you can help decide the future of New York's newest national park.

NEW YORK'S NEWEST NATIONAL PARK

Governors Island is a 172-acre island in New York Harbor, approximately ¼-mile off the southern tip of Manhattan. One of the most historic sites in New York, Governors Island was settled by the Dutch West India Company in 1624, and was home to Dutch and British Governors. In the 19th century it became a strategic coastal defense site and later administrative center for the US Army, who occupied and managed the island for almost 200 years. In 1966, the Army turned over the post to the Coast Guard who occupied the island until 1996.

On January 31, 2003, the federal government transferred

the 22-acre Governors Island National Monument to the National Park Service and the remaining 150 acres to the Governors Island Education & Preservation Corporation. The National Monument's primary historic resources include Fort Jay and Castle Williams – 1812-era structures listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places. The National Monument sits within a 90-acre National Historic Landmark District. The National Park Service offers seasonal ranger-led tours and is collaborating with GIPCC on island-wide planning, operations, public access, and visitor activities.

NATIONAL MONUMENT

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GOVERNORS ISLAND



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